

A HOMEOWNER'S GUIDE TO REMODELING

An Architect's Insights into Setting the Stage for a Successful Remodel

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“Honey, what if...?”

Those words have big implications. Often they signal that your home no longer meets your needs or lifestyle.

Families change. Households combine. We age and have changing access needs. Children are born or move away. You want to entertain more. You develop new interest or hobbies.

Remodeling is a cost-effective way to meet these new needs and stay in the neighborhood you love.

But before you dive in you need to transform those dreamy desires into clear objectives. This is vital. Being clear on your goals saves time, money and stress.

The best remodeling projects are collaboration between a creative, experienced and skilled architects and an informed client. They are built on a shared understanding of the goals and deep agreement about the path to reach them.

Clients who can clearly express what they want to achieve help make this collaboration succeed. But you are no expert, so how can you get up to speed quickly? That's what this guide is all about, to help you become an informed partner in a major remodel.

The following four stages of preparation will help guide you in refining your needs and identifying your wishes, to take those dreamy desires and transform them into clear ideas about how to remake your home.

Stage 1: Rate your Space

How well does your home work today? Does your kitchen fit your everyday lifestyle, and also fill the bill for those big gatherings, such as Thanksgiving or holidays? What's missing? Fill out this worksheet to get a clear view of problem areas.

Size

- Room big enough to do what you want to do
- Too big or too small
- Ceilings too low or too high
- Adequate storage for organization

Location and Flow

- Room work in the overall flow of your home
- Transitioning from adjacent spaces
- Difficult to reach, up or down stairs
- Room integrated to the design or is it isolated
- Surrounding noise

Function

- Adequate lighting
- Layout appropriate for activities
- Suitable for current or future lifestyle
- Fully functioning

Enter a rating of 1 to 5 for each room, with 1 being ideal and 5 being worst.

Priority - Rank the priority of the room from 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest priority.

ROOM	SIZE	LOCATION	FUNCTION	PRIORITY	RATING
Entry					
Living Room					
Dining Room					
Family Room					
Kitchen					
Bath 1					
Bath 2					
Bath 3					
Bath 4					
Bedroom 1					
Bedroom 2					
Bedroom 3					
Bedroom 4					
Bedroom 4					
Other					

Rooms with the highest ratings indicate trouble spots.

Stage 2: Create a Wish List

Now it is time to think beyond today and consider your home tomorrow, and whether you want to maintain the present style or change the style.

What would a perfect day in your perfect custom home be like? What would you do when you woke up in the morning?

Indulge in a spa bath? Host a lavish dinner? Avoid the commute and work at home?

What is missing from your home?

- Guest Accommodation
- Space for entertainment
- Media Room
- Gourmet Kitchen or gourmet space
- Multi-use Room i.e. Hobby

In the space below briefly note what you have dreamed about doing in your home, if only....

Stage 3: Set Priorities

Now that you have mapped the gaps and possibilities, you need to set priorities. After all, few of us can make all the changes we need or want. But we can get to that perfect home by taking it one project at a time, based on what we want or need more.

Priority List

The renovation **MUST** include these items:

These changes are desirable, but not mandatory (i.e. a wine bar or new outdoor space):

This is off limits (i.e. changing style, using certain materials):

Also list any remaining questions or unresolved issues:

Stage 4: Do a Reality Check

Now that you have a good grasp of what you want or need, it is time to partner with an expert to begin sorting out the scope of the project, and to begin shaping a quality design.

The Architect's role is to discuss the family's lifestyle and future needs, and to suggest various design options. This may help the family recognize and address some of the design intangibles that may otherwise have been overlooked. The design should be sensitive to the family's needs as well as integration of the design with the neighborhood.

A creative and experienced Architect can see all the possibilities and guide you and your project, minimizing problems and maximizing the results. Because you have gone through much of the preparation process, you can do a home walk-through with an Architect and get a good idea of what is feasible, what it will cost and what the process will involve.

Richard H. Dodd and Associate works with you to develop a comprehensive Building Program that addresses your needs and in plain language explains the process and technicalities involved. Improving your home to fit your dreams should be exciting and rewarding. It can be hard work, but it should be an enjoyable process. We want you to be satisfied, but we expect you will be thrilled. We love it when our clients exclaim, "Wow, this is my home!"

Investing in a quality plan and design at the start is the best way to ensure that you receive true value and satisfaction, and that the process is smooth and sometimes even fun.

Because the last thing you want to hear at the conclusion of a project are those same three words, but this time tinged with remorse or doubt:

"Honey, what if...?"

